

BUILDING MASS

For large-scale development, no continuous wall above the base shall exceed 60 feet in length before creating a setback. Setbacks between street fronting walls must be at least 24 feet wide and 8 feet deep and contain windows in the wall perpendicular to the street.

Strengthening existing requirements for varied building planes would help create buildings that emphasize volume and have more effective visual massing.

Our existing standard requires buildings to change planes every 60 feet, but does not specify any other standard to create volume. The effect of the current ordinance often promotes buildings that meet the standard through the use of false or applied facades.

Why This Matters

Large footprint buildings which can be read as multiple volumes are more effective at breaking down visual scale.

Requiring setback standards for facades would result in multiple volumes and real articulation in the building, not simply minor facade variations, as is current practice.

Introducing windows into the perpendicular wall of the setback produces benefits for the building's interior spaces and completes the visual purpose for the setback from the exterior.

The original Chadbourne Report, on which the current Ordinance is based, anticipated this idea. However, at the time, the pressures of large-scale development had not been as immediate and the dimensional standards for setbacks were never adopted.



Facade recesses should have a minimum depth to allow windows to be placed in the face perpendicular to the street.



Large-scale buildings with multiple distinct masses achieve variety, hierarchy, and a clear sense of volumes.



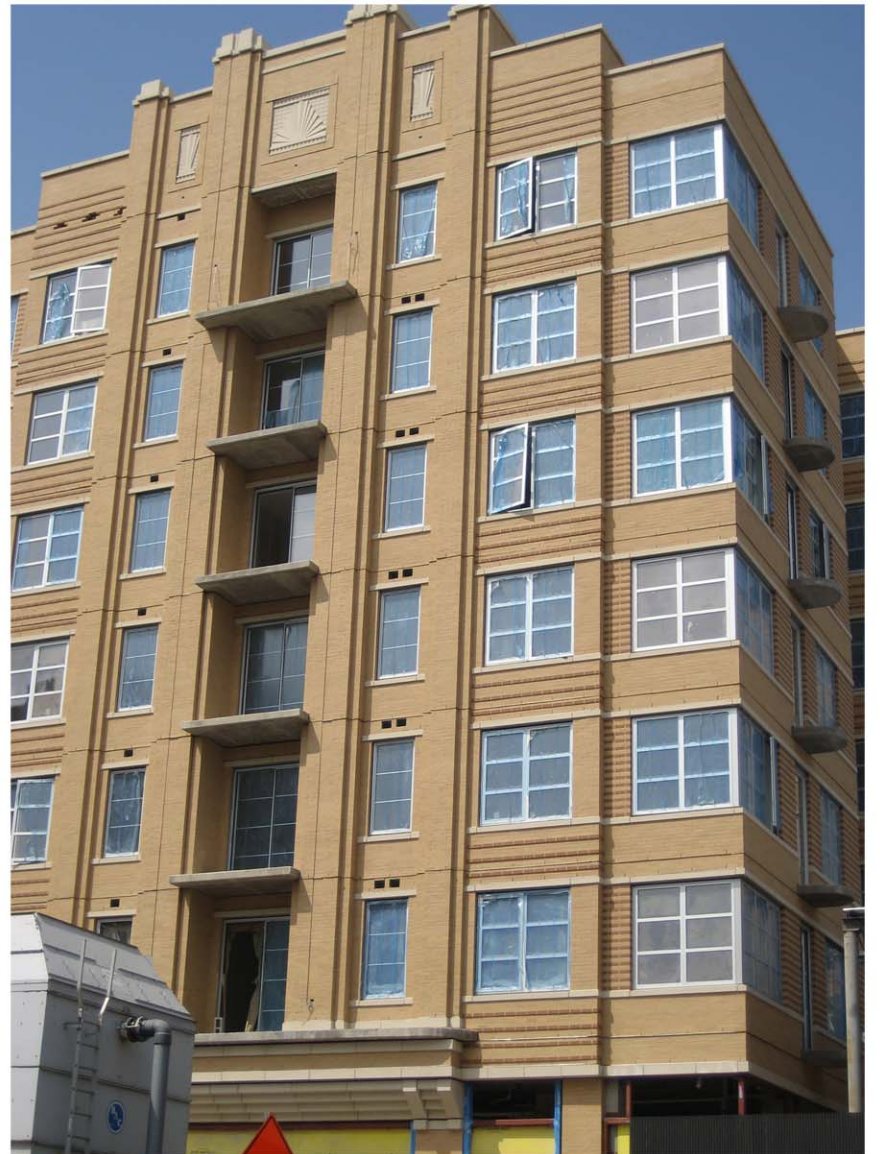
Offsetting planes without a strong purpose produces "false facades".

DESIGN PRINCIPLE 5

BUILDING MASS



Setbacks in the mass of a large-scale building should introduce windows in the perpendicular surface.



Wall planes that are less than 60 feet would not require a minimum setback.



Combination of setbacks and materials are employed to create interest and variety in a large building.



An open courtyard serves to break the mass, creating a composition of multiple volumes.



This building's mass is set back above the base level allowing light to penetrate interior spaces and providing relief in the streetwall.